

Frequently Asked Questions - 811 PRA Program -

Grand Rapids Focus Group (6/2):

- Are only top ten counties eligible for 811 PRA funds?
 - o All counties are eligible. Since funding will be allocated by demand, a top ten list of counties with the highest need was compiled from the Estimates of Need for Supportive Housing Services handout. Data for all 83 Michigan counties is included in this handout.
- Will units be added to developments five at a time?
 - o No, but in order to fulfill the goals of 40 PRA units in 2016, 75 PRA units in 2017, and 59 PRA units in 2018, preference may be given to developments requesting five or more PRA units when reviewing NOFA applications.
- If an existing PSH tax credit development already meets the 25% assisted unit cap, is the development eligible for PRA?
 - o No, since the 811 PRA Program promotes disability integration rather than high concentrations of the target population in only a few locations.
- Do the PRA Housing Choice Vouchers reduce the number of vouchers already offered to each county?
 - o No, the PRA vouchers are new vouchers and do not reduce current county allocations.
- Does the liability of providing services fall to property management?
 - o No. Providing services is the responsibility of the support coordinator and housing agent.
- Is assistance available to pay all tenant rent in cases of no tenant income?
 - o Yes, although disability income is typically in place with applicants. If a disability claim is pending at the time of unit placement, PRA assistance may be used to cover the tenant rent in full.
- If an existing PRA tenant's disability improves to the point where services are no longer necessary, is the tenant still eligible to maintain residency?
 - o Yes. Upon initial qualification for the 811 PRA Program, the household may not be evicted simply for refusal of services.
- For pre-existing tax credit developments, are funds available to make units now accessible?
 - o Not specifically PRA funds; however, a range of possible accommodations such as grab bars, ramps, etc... may be available through the Money Follows The Person Program.
- Can the PRA units float?
 - o Yes. Upon an award of PRA funds, the PRA units may be initially distributed and redistributed among the property as necessary.
- When can an owner apply? Do they need to have secured a tax credit award?
 - o Owners can apply gaining PRA conditional to tax credit award.

Comments:

- It was suggested that the webinar lead with stories and examples of successes with the target market. It helps to put a face with the program's goals and impact.
- Per the housing specialists, the 811 PRA Program resolves the following difficulties to successfully placing households:
 - o Availability of barrier-free/accessible units
 - o Affordability via rental assistance specifically for the age 18-61, non-elderly population
 - o Flexibility of reasonable accommodations
- We will allow 4% pass through. The power point should be updated.
- It seemed to be helpful for developers to understand the resources services providers utilize. Funding sources, communication logistics, etc.
- Before the session Tyler had people sign in and make sure they got the handouts. Sean directed people to the conference room. This seemed to work well.

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Detroit Focus Group (6/4):

- Is funding available for clothing, furniture, etc. for these populations vacating nursing homes for PRA independent living?
 - o Yes, through the Money Follows The Person program as well as other DHHS financing sources.
- Are most of the target population wheelchair-bound?
 - o Not necessarily – the supportive service and accessibility needs of each client cover a wide range.
- How are the homeless defined as eligible?
 - o Applicants must have a service case with Community Mental Health, and preference has yet to be determined since MSHDA has other programs designed specifically to serve the homeless.
- Can tenants age out, or disqualify at recertification due to an increase in income?
 - o No. Upon initially qualifying the unit at move-in, the household maintains its qualified PRA status regardless of age or income at recertification. Note: Since PRA units may float, an over-income at recertification unit that no longer receives assistance may be swapped with a vacant unit to maintain compliance.
- If the PRA program is not renewed by HUD, what is the owner's liability to continue serving the target population?
 - o There is no owner liability to continue to rent to new PRA applicants since the rental assistance contract is void if the program becomes discontinued. This scenario is very unlikely since HUD seems to be moving away from funding brick and mortar and instead funds populations.
- Can a zero-income applicant qualify?
 - o Yes, although disability income is typically in place with most applicants.
- Is Tenant Selection Criteria required within the PRA program?
 - o Yes, and the Tenant Selection Criteria mirrors the Section 8 program requirements.
- Is any preference given toward new construction vs. rehab when awarding?
 - o No. Both construction types are valued equally within the application review process.
- Is one lead housing agent from DHHS assigned to each county, or shared?
 - o There is one lead that uses a triage system of contacts behind the scenes so that one single point of contact is available for waiting lists, service problems, etc...
- Are service providers and waitlist managers trained in fair housing?
 - o Yes. Furthermore, the development requires an Affirmative Fair Housing Marketing Plan and all applicants must meet any owner-imposed screening criteria (criminal background, credit history, etc...)

Comments:

- Owners must understand that Section 504, reasonable accommodations, and fair housing all apply.
- It is important to potentially relax owner-imposed credit standards since the target population typically scores lower than the general population.
- Developments applying for five or more PRA units are preferred. The maximum number of eligible PRA units is determined based on the 25% cap of supportive housing units per property.

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Lansing Focus Group (6/16):

- Does an extended use property qualify for PRA?
 - o Yes, as long as it's a LIHTC development.
- Will two bedroom units be available for tenants that need a live in care/chore provider?
 - o This is acceptable under the PRA guidelines as long as the service provider and provisions are properly documented. (Expand on requirements for the HCV's.)
- Can property owners be reimbursed for unit modifications needed for tenants with disabilities?
 - o Money Follows the Person requires that modifications are pre-approved and does not reimburse for reasonable accommodation upgrades. The Housing Services Coordinator will be the point of contact for unit upgrades using MFP. The development community would like more details on how the MFP transactions occur.
- Can a PRA eligible tenant be placed in an existing unit that is designated to have rents less than 50% AMI?
 - o Yes, because PRA is for tenants with income at or below 30% AMI.
- Are the HCV's strictly for tenants that are homeless with disabilities?
 - o No, the HCV's are for PRA eligible tenants which could include homeless disabled.
- Will outside parties have input on RFP development?
 - o No, the RFP will be designed by MSHDA and DHHS.

General observation:

There is a great need for an outreach initiative to be created. Owners expressed that they don't know who to contact when they have vacancies and the housing service providers indicated that they don't know which developments accommodate at risk populations:

- Can a contact list be sent to focus group participants?
- Some of the housing service providers said they would engage in connecting with property owners/managers if they knew who to contact.